
THE LAY-MAN'S MAGAZINE.

"THOU SHALT LOVE THE LORD THY GOD WITH ALL THY HEART, WITH ALL THY SOUL, AND WITH ALL THY MIND—AND THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF."

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WE are always happy to perceive an attention to the blessed Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ increasing among the young—Their minds being less occupied, their habits of inattention less confirmed, we may always hope that in them truth will take abiding root.—They are to be the future actors on the busy scene. They are to be the parents of another generation—They are to form the minds of those who shall come after us. With how much satisfaction then, must we behold them swearing allegiance to God their Maker.

With joy have we heard that the spirit of the Lord has been poured out upon the northern Colleges, thus preparing many to be servants of a crucified master.

With joy do we perceive also, that in Virginia, the piety of those who are in the morn of life, is increasing.

We might advert to instances under our own eye, where the devout attention of many youth, of both sexes, give us reason to hope that they will arise to shed a sweet remembrance over the ashes of their parents, long after those parents shall have tenanted the sepulchre—but these we leave for the present.

In the Church under the care of the Rev. Mr. M'Guire, of Fredericksburgh, there has been for a long time an increase of devotion. The young persons there are exchanging those frivolous unidead amusements, which too many delight in, for the table of the Lord and the active duties of the Christian. They are beginning to live like immortals.

In Winchester, a number of the young Ladies have laudably associated themselves into a Reading Socie-

ty, for the purpose of improvement in religious knowledge. How honorable, thus to employ the morning of life in diligently preparing to be useful in its meridian, and happy in its decline.

In Dumfries, the attention to the means of grace, is very manifestly increasing. Not only do the body of the people wait on God in his sanctuary, but some youth are anxiously asking, as did the Disciples in the days of the Apostles, "what shall I do to be saved?" In the language of our informant, "Oh may this flame go from house to house, and from heart to heart, till all shall be possessed of that peace of God which the world cannot give nor take away." Here also the young Ladies are forming themselves into an association for religious improvement. Their society proposes to meet once a week and spend a few hours in reading such works as are calculated to inform on subjects relating to eternal life.—May it prove a nursery for Heaven.

Thinking there may be young Ladies in the County of Jefferson or Berkeley disposed to imitate the example of their sisters elsewhere, we take the liberty of subjoining an outline of the plan of the society at Dumfries.

I. No person can be a member, unless they appear anxiously desirous to use the means of grace diligently.

II. To meet once a week, commencing the exercises by singing, continuing them by reading a portion of the word of God and praying—then reading such books as are approved for religious instruction, closing by singing.

III. The consent of two thirds ne-

cessary to the admission of a member.

IV. The consent of two thirds necessary to the dismissal of a member.

V. There shall be a member appointed to preside, who shall cause the business of the meeting to be conducted in a reverential manner.

VI. The duties of reading, &c. to be performed by the members alternately.

We understand that in these meetings no conversation is permitted, except upon religious subjects.

The intelligence already given, must rejoice the hearts of true Christians, but this is not all.—In Culpeper, Fauquier and Loudon Counties, a similar increase of attention to the means of grace exists. Also in Richmond and the Counties below. In Norfolk alone, one hundred and thirty persons received the rite of confirmation a short time since. *Laus Deo!*

From a London paper.

CEYLON.

Conversion to Christianity of an eminent Priest of Budhu.

It is but seldom that we have the satisfaction of recording a change of sentiment among the Priests of Heathenism; still more seldom can we trace the progress of that conversion, and the reasonings on which the convert adopts his new faith. We have no authentic history to a similar progress, in the mind of any heathen, especially in the Apostolic age; and therefore we can only imagine on what convictions they relinquished the worship of Jupiter and Juno, of Apollo and Minerva, of Neptune and Ceres. They must have had some train of thought, some inducing cause, impelling them to abandon the rights of their infancy, the customs of their ancestors, the institutions of their country. They must, further,

have some powerful motive for embracing a foreign and a despised profession. Perhaps it is scarcely possible to conceive a closer resemblance to what took place, in those early days, than the instance before us, which is a fact, beyond question or doubt. It has much the air of what might have passed in Greece or Italy, in the first century of the Christian religion. M. Chateaubriand (now Viscount) formerly introduced a conversion, the work of his imagination, into a romance; with what ever attention to produce a beautiful effect that was conducted, the present is much more striking. It excels, as a portrait from life, excels in resemblance of nature, the most finished production of fancy.

Ceylon Government Gazette of December 14, 1814.

On Christmas day a very remarkable Baptism was celebrated in the middle of divine service, before a full congregation, at the Church in the Fort. A Buddhist Priest, of great eminence for character, talents and literary attainments, after a mature deliberation, and a careful perusal of the Gospel in the Cingalese Language, had determined to throw aside his yellow robes, and embrace the Christian Religion.

It was in vain that his resolution was assailed by his brother Priests, and by the solicitations of his own family. Their importunities only served to agitate his feelings, but could not shake his determined conviction, founded upon examination and reflection.—He gave up rank, affluence, connections and family, to follow the dictates of his conscience. He was baptised immediately after the Second Lesson, by the name of "Petrus Panditte Sekarras." Mr. Armour and Mr. Clough were his godfathers. From the natural influence of his character, and abilities, such an example promises to be of

signal use in the propagation of Christianity. The causes of his adoption of the Christian Religion, and the probable consequence of his conversion, were noticed with much effect by Mr. Twisleton, in his sermon on the occasion; and they furnished a most appropriate conclusion to a discourse delivered on the Anniversary of the Nativity of Him who was destined to be *a light to lighten the Gentiles*.

Mr. Clough, a gentleman sent out as a missionary by the Church Missionary Society, sometimes attended the idolatrous worship of the natives, and made close enquiries into its nature. He particularly addressed himself to this Priest, perceiving him to be an acute man, and thoroughly versed in the religion of his country. By degrees they reposed mutual confidence in each other. The following is the substance of some of their conferences:—

“You say that the God of whom you speak is infinitely great in all his attributes; that he created the world and all its inhabitants, and governs the world by the same power; and that he is present as much in one place as another, and views every action of man; and that he demands proper worship from all his creatures, and such as Christians pay him; that such is his holiness, that he hates sin, and such is his justice that he will punish sin, and particularly the failure of proper worship—how can a God of justice punish an Idolater, if that Idolater worships according to the light afforded him and not according to the light of Christianity, of which Idolaters are ignorant? and further (he added) this is applicable to the Cingalese in general—why then has not God instructed us better?”

I answered, that although God is a being of infinite justice, he is also a God of mercy, and that he could do nothing contrary to goodness and ho-

liness—and hence, when it is said *He will judge every man according to his works*, yet he will do it according to the light each man possessed. I added, that his questions had not involved the smallest difficulty, because it could not be supposed that God had permitted the Cingalese and other idolatrous nations to remain in a state of mental darkness, for the purpose of judging them with a less rigorous judgment; but their ignorance might be considered as permitted by God to stick to them, a just retaliation for their forefather's abuse of the light which we now enjoy; and the difference in the day of judgment between a christian and a Cingalese idolater will appear according to their particular circumstances; the one will be judged by the gospel, the other by the light with which he had been favored.

Perceiving that he continued to be very inquisitive about christianity, I furnished him with a copy of four gospels in Cingalese, with which he was much pleased, saying, that he had long wished to see: “and be assured I will read it with great attention; but (he said) may I request an additional favor of you, which is to allow me to trouble you to explain any parts which I may not understand” To this I most readily assented. I presented to him the gospels at his own heathen temple, when some of his pupils for the Buddhist priesthood were present, who were not a little surprised at the joy which he expressed, and the care which he manifested in wrapping up the book, as being more valuable than gold.

After this he soon put me to the pleasing task of explaining, to the best of my ability, those things which were rather mysterious to him, such as the situations of the nations mentioned in the New Testament, particularly the Jews and Romans; their rise, progress, state, &c. I also stated the chronology of the Patriarchs,

particularly those from whom JESUS CHRIST descended, and various other particulars. After he had read the gospel several times, he began to lament that he had not the old Testament, supposing that it would give a clear explanation of the new—said he

“ Since I became acquainted with you, your conversation and your answers to my different questions have made a deep impression on my mind; and during the last three weeks I have been in a state of great distress of mind. I have frequently returned home, after my interviews with you, unable to sleep for many nights.”

I asked him the cause of this trouble? He replied, that it arose from an apprehension, that he and his countrymen who followed the religion of Budhu had been mistaken in their religious principles, which was to him a consideration of the greatest importance;—he added, that the more he thought on the subject, the more the apprehensions increased, inasmuch as the evidences of the Christian religion were making stronger and stronger impressions upon him.

I then asked him whether he thought that the God of the Christian was he who ought to be worshiped in preference to idols? He replied, that he had been considering the subject candidly and impartially, as though he was a member of neither communion, and in all its bearings; and that he had offered up prayers for direction in a matter so important, and that if he and his countrymen were in error, he prayed that he might receive conviction in the clearest manner, and that a way might be opened by which he might leave his present profession and embrace christianity, not only for his own good, but for that of others to whom he would preach it—He added, that the more he prayed, the more did his desire to quit the religion of Budhu increase.—He then asked me to assist him in

managing this, for which his gratitude would be extreme; and he should think that the great God had sent me from England to Ceylon on purpose to instruct him, and shew him the right way of worshipping God; and, in return, he should think it incumbent on him, to his latest hour, to make known to his countrymen the blessing of the gospel, which had been thus offered to him through my means.

Perceiving that he was prepared to manifest his conversion, I asked him what he conceived the most speedy and effectual mode of doing it? He replied, “ By laying aside my priestly garments, and joining myself to the society of Christians;” adding, “ I am in my present situation as comfortable as I can wish, with regard to the things of this world; but as soon as I throw off the garment I shall be deprived of all the means of support, and this gives me uneasiness; and, in case I embrace christianity, I shall be brought into distress, because you know, for some time, I should be of no use to any religion;” meaning, he would not be able to preach; “ yet, if I had only a sufficient knowledge of the Christian religion to enable me to preach it, I believe the great and good God would not suffer me for one moment to want; and one of the greatest acts of mercy you can do, will be to assist me a little in this particular.”

About this time there was a meeting convened of several Buddhist priests, for some particular occasion, near Galle, and the meeting was to continue for some days. I was apprehensive that he might be shaken, or not sufficiently prepared to stand the attacks of such a number of his former acquaintances. I however paid him a visit at this meeting, when they were all present, and were not a little surprised when they perceived my convert advance and join me.—We then retired, and I began a very

close conversation about the state of his mind, and found him unshaken. I asked him whether he did not feel reluctance at leaving his religion?—He answered, that the reluctance was easily overcome, because he was about to receive a better, and he added, that he felt no difficulty in casting his lot with mine, and should be very glad to have the same place with me in the next world; and that he should have little trouble in his mind, if he thought he should be in the same situation with me at the Day of Judgment.

At this time a singular circumstance occurred, which seemed to give weight to all his past conduct. The aforementioned assembly of Priests availed themselves of opportunities of receiving personal and public improvement, both by night and day, through the means of my faithful convert; and he, being the senior Priest, was looked to for instruction. One evening when they were assembled, and were expecting to hear him preach on the religion of Bubhu, he pulled out the Cingales New Testament, and began to read the first chapter of St. Matthew, and proceeded to read other chapters, making his observations, till morning, by which time he had finished the whole Gospel. He was heard with surprise and attention, they frequently interrupted him while he answered to the best of his ability. He came to me afterwards and related this circumstance; and, after a long conversation, expressed himself in the following manner—"I am like a hungry man tied to a tree, with a table covered with rich provisions near, but out of reach; and this will be my state till the day of my liberty comes."

We then talked about his being baptised, and he expressed a wish to comply with that ordinance as early as possible, which he considers to be the grand characteristic mark of those who are not worshippers of Idols. He

was one of the most celebrated in the island, known both in the Candian and British dominions—he resided for some time with the king of Candia, and is every where extolled for his extensive knowledge, both of the religion and literature of the island, as well as the Oriental languages.

The matter was blazed abroad through the district, and came to the knowledge of the High Priest, who was so alarmed by the intelligence, that he assembled fourteen of the head Priests, and sent them to prevail upon him if possible, to abandon the idea of embracing christianity; stating, that if a Priest of his rank and respectability in the religion of Bubhu forsook them, it would not only disgrace his own character, but injure the cause. He continued immovable; and the matter spread so rapidly, that before the fourteen left him they were increased to fifty-seven, using every possible method to prevail upon him to continue as he was. Besides the Priests there were his family connections, some weeping, some scolding, and others threatening to put an end to their existence. Many head men of the district came to him with large presents, observing, "If you forsake the Priesthood, it will ruin our religion in this country." However, he broke through them all and made his escape at the hazard of his life.

After he had arrived in Columbo, he had some sharp conflicts, both from within and without. He received several letters of a very severe kind;—I was almost ready to wonder how he maintained his resolution. In this case we might say of a truth—"Not unto us, O Lord, but unto thy name shall be the praise!" A day or two before his baptism, I called upon him, and found him uncommonly cheerful and happy. "I dreamt," said he, "last night, that my robes were covered with all kinds of filthy reptiles. I was so disgusted at the

sight that I thought I went to a river and cast them in, never to touch them again. When I woke this morning I found myself naked and all my robes folded up and thrown on the far side of the room. Now thought I, God has sent this dream to shew me the bad state I am in, and to confirm me in all my former resolutions, and I am truly sorry that I am forced to put them on again." He hardly ever let us rest after this, until something could be provided to dress him in.

After his baptism his excellency the governor sent him two suits of new clothes. He is to have a salary from government as a translator, and is now about to translate the Bible into two languages of this island, the Cingalese and Paariah, or Maggada, which is spoken in the interior. He is to study the Scriptures under the care of the Rev. Mr. Armour, who now resides in Columbo, until qualified to preach.

Obituary.

DIED, at Harper's Ferry, on Saturday the 2nd of December, Miss PRUDENCE BEALL, in the 17th year of her age.

Artless and amiable, she was dear to her friends—she was esteemed by all who knew her.

Patient in her hours of languishment—sincere and fervent in her endeavors to prepare for another world, she has left behind a grateful remembrance.

Truly was it delightful to hear her, tho' in the very bloom of beauty and the morn of life, with the earnestness of deep feeling exclaim "Oh my sweet Jesus" "My dear Heavenly Father."

Oft did she put up the petition of the Publican, and with her parting words she commended her soul to the mercy of her Saviour.

She was a fair but short-lived flower

—We trust she has been transplanted to the parterres of Heaven.

Ye young ladies who are disposed, like the butterfly, to sport amid the trifling dissipations of the frivolous and the vain, come to this grave of beauty and of youth, and learn how great is your temerity. Death will soon summon you to the bar of Judgment!—Haste then to obtain that interest in Christ, which will make your pilgrimage thro' this world placid, and your entrance into another glorious.

The following from a Baltimore paper of the 6th Dec. describes a death such as we wish every mortal might experience. We present it to our readers with a view to their instruction. Episcopalians, she was your Sister—may you imitate her example!

DIED, on Monday evening last, at the seat of her brother Alexander C. Hanson, Esq. MARY JANE GROSVENOR, wife of Thomas P. Grosvenor, Esq. aged twenty-five years. The disease which terminated her life at this early age, was that destroying angel of our Country women, a consumption.

On the 13th of July last, she ruptured a blood vessel in her lungs, which was followed by nearly five months of decline—months of the most painful suffering. During all this time she furnished to all her surrounding friends a most impressive lesson, of the efficacy of a christian faith, upon the soul in days of suffering and trouble. Very early in her disorder she was convinced it would terminate fatally; nor did this conviction strike any terror to her soul. She had certainly an awful sense of the eternal importance of the great change which was rapidly approaching, but she reposed solely on the merits of her Redeemer, and looked to his cross alone for her salvation,

leaning on this staff of ages for support, she calmly approached the moment of her departure constant in prayer, in praises and thanksgivings. She has left to her friends all the testimony that can be had on this side the grave, that she is "gathered to her fathers, having the testimony of a good conscience; in communion of the Catholic Church; in the confidence of a certain faith; in the comfort of a reasonable religious and holy hope; in favor with our God, and in perfect charity with the world." It was a blessed sight to behold this young and lovely woman, gifted with the highest mental endowments, thus early prepared to fall asleep in the bosom of her Redeemer. Christians have long read, with admiration and joy, the blessed state of Addison's mind, when he was about to enter the world of spirits.—"Come," said he to a young friend, "come and see how a Christian can die."—These were the words of his Christian triumph. The last words of this young creature, uttered in a full & most lively knowledge of her actual condition, about five minutes before her death, were addressed to the afflicted relatives and friends surrounding her, "May God bless you all.—Give him thanks that he has enabled me to set you this example."

Such an exit may be truly said to rob Death of his sting, and the grave of its victory.

From the Christian Observer.

I enclose you, Mr. Editor, a paper, which, though it is not dated, must, I think, from its situation in my journal of occurrences, have been written in the close of the year 1801. It is word for word, as nearly as recollection at the time enabled me to write it down, the substance of a conversation which passed between me and a poor man, all whose connexions were Catholics,

but who constantly attended my Church himself. I will not, however, anticipate his character, which will appear from the recital.

Extract from passing Occurrences.

"There is a poor man who constantly frequents my Church. On no public occasion, unless prevented by illness, have I missed him out of it. His name is Barny, and he is generally esteemed a sort of idiot; yet simple as he evidently is, his knowledge in spiritual things is enough to shame many a wiser head. He gets his subsistence by going among the parishioners, who make an annual subscription for him to procure him clothes. Having just come to make his usual application to me on this subject, and Amanda having remarked to me, that she had observed Barny apparently much affected by parts of my discourses, which she conceived he could not understand, I resolved to seize the opportunity of inquiring from himself, whether he received any benefit from coming to Church. The following is the conversation that passed between us:—*

"I believe you love to go to church, Barny?"—"I do."

"Why do you love going to church?"—"I hear the word, I hear good words there."

"What do you hear?"—"I hear that the blood of Jesus washes away my sins, all my sins."

"Do you love Jesus Christ, Barny?"—"I do, sir."

"How do you know that you love him?"—"He is precious to me."

"Do you ever recollect, Barny, when he was not precious to you?"—"I do."

"Do you ever pray to God, Barny?"—"I do, sir, in secret, coming along."

"Do you think God hears you?"—"I do."

* We have no poor-rates in Ireland.

"Why do you think so?"—"He puts it into the people's hearts to help me—the summer when I had scarce a morsel to eat."

"You think, then, it was God who brought you through the *dear summer*?"—"It was."

"Barny! are you afraid to die?"—"If my soul was safe, I would wish to die—the night!"*

"Why, Barny! would you wish to die, and go into the grave?"—"I would—I would wish to be with my Lord."

"Barny, do you recollect, when I was a child you used to speak bad words: do you say any bad words now?"—"No, no!" (With emphasis.)

"Are you sorry for having talked these bad words?"—"I am—very sorry."

"Barny! Does any person talk with you about religion?" *No person.*

"How have you then learned to give me these answers?"—"I learn by the blood of Jesus Christ, that he will wash away my sins—And the Lord God wash away all my sins that I have committed."

The reader will be inclined to think, that Barny, whose action and manner, and a little stoppage in his speech, added double weight to every thing said, is not the fool he is generally supposed to be. But I will venture to affirm, that Barny could not give satisfaction upon any other subject.—Barny can give no account about his own age, and, though living in the country all his life, knows not, I believe, the parts of a plough, nor can he perform any part of farming work. But Barny *knows* that he is a *sinner*, and that he has a *Saviour*, who is able to save such sinners as he. Barny loves the Book which reveals such a Saviour to him, and to wait in those courts where he hears *good words* about him whom he has found to be *precious* to his soul. Barny has not

* The night—i. e. this night: I should think it wrong to amend Barney's language.

a mere *cant* about religion; for the change in Barny's *conduct* shews a change in his *heart*, and that he is really the character he professes himself to be. One remarkable trait in that character we ought not to overlook. It is this; that he looks thro' the creatures to God, and esteems it as an answer to prayer, "that the people help him;" and in particular, that being perfectly helpless himself, he was brought through these last severe times. Many other reflections naturally present themselves from this little history; but they are obvious, and I omit them.

Here, infidelity! is a *lesson* for you, if any thing can give *you* instruction. I defy you to produce such an instance of the benefit arising from your teaching. Here is a person reclaimed from sin, and evidently taught of God, when his own reasoning powers were weak, and thro' the medium of those very *means* of *grace* which you affect to despise.

The above, sir, were my reflections on the history of poor Barny, in the year 1801; and they are still the same. I have now only to add, that he is gone to his reward. He continued the same faithful attendance in the courts of the Lord's house that he had been accustomed to give, and and I had other conversations with him similar to the above; but missing him for some Sundays in his favourite place of resort, whence he derived so much pleasure and profit, I found upon inquiry that he was no more. His friends, if he had any I can call so, had neither religion nor kindness enough to inform me of his illness, or I should have hastened to have smoothed his pillow in his sickness, and exhilarated his sinking spirits, by talking of that Lord whom he loved so well. His portion is in heaven, and his memory will be perpetuated in your pages. I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

IRISH.